

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, March 30, 2004
Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Joseph Barrell, James Heigham, Deborah Emello, Andrew McClurg, Karl Haglund

Also present: Jeffrey Wheeler-Planning Coordinator

7:10 p.m. There being a quorum, Chairman Barrell opened the meeting.

1. General Business:

Minutes from February 24, 2004 and March 8, 2004 were approved without corrections.

2. Public Hearing to Re-Zone Portions of Land to Waverley Square Fire Station

James Heigham read the Public Hearing notice.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Mike Menzie, 40 Waverley Street, asked for clarification on why the Town cannot spot zone the station
2. Charles Styron, 35 Waverley Street, asked that the rezoning proposal not encroach on the neighborhood and to make the area as small as possible. He suggested that there would not be opposition for multi-family housing at the station.
3. Marian Cote, 37 Burnham Street, suggested that the rezoning start at the fire house and go towards Hawthorne Street instead of towards Waverley Square.
4. John Greene, 22 Waverley Street, stated that businesses do not belong in residential areas. He felt that this proposal is going backwards and not forward since the Town previously rezoned this area.
5. James MacIsaac, 23-25 Ripley Road, asked that the proposal be shrunk. He concurred that the rezoning should go from the fire house to Hawthorne Street and not include houses on Sycamore or White Streets.
6. Grace Taylor, 32 Waverley Street, stated that she was against mixed use.
7. Shelia Flewelling, resident of the neighborhood, stated that she was opposed to the rezoning and inquired why properties were included on White and Sycamore Streets.

8. Tom Neel, 76 White Street, stated that it makes no sense to convert residential to commercial, though he recognized that this was an opportunity to correct existing nonconforming uses.
9. Karen Shea, 37 Waverley Street, stated that she was against re-zoning of the area and does not want to see any more commercial uses.
10. Diane Palmer, 69 Waverley Street, asked that the Town just re-zone the fire station. Though she acknowledged that businesses exist on the south side of Trapelo Road and perhaps those could be included.
11. Douglas, 81 White Street, asked the Board to consider those who live in the area. He added that parking is terrible in this area.
12. Nancy, a resident of Waverley Square, inquired about what the vision is for the area.
13. Henry Kazarian, 22 Banks Street, suggested that the scope of the re-zoning was too much and questioned why this proposal was being considered.
14. Sallye Bleiberg, 14 Harris Street, suggested that the proposal just include those properties on the south side of Trapelo Road.
15. Fred Esptein, neighbor in the area, asked if any developers were interested.
16. Theresa O'Connor, 28 Waverley Street, asked that the process be slowed down to review the implications of commercial use. She wanted to wait for the recommendation on the fire station before looking to re-zone the fire station. She expressed concern about undermining the re-use process.
17. Scott Palmer, 69 Waverley Street, requested that the proposal be for the smallest area possible.
18. Meg O'Brien, resident, cautioned the Board about being too business friendly. She agreed with supporting existing business but does not want to extend commercial uses into residential areas. She saw this proposal as an invasion of the neighborhood.
19. Bill Chemelli, Ripley Road, expressed concern about accessing Butler School and questioned how the proposed rezoning would impact children.
20. Debbie Green, 22 Waverley Street, reiterated what others have said. She also expressed concern about on-street parking and the difficulties that this creates in maneuvering cars down the street.
21. Martin Cohen, 21 Dunbarton Road, suggested that the Town sell the property conditional upon the property owner securing the necessary permits.

22. John Madden, 78 Waverley Street, expressed concerns about the traffic and children crossing the street.

23. Eleanor Kauffman, a neighbor, expressed concerns about parking and safety of children.

24. Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverley Street, stated that development should focus on Trapelo Road and expressed concerns about traffic and parking.

Jennifer Page, Vice Chair of the Waverley Square Fire Station Re-Use Committee explained the process that the Re-Use Committee is following. She added that a lot of buildings are empty because they are non-conforming uses and it is difficult and time consuming to secure the necessary permits.

Andy McClurg stated that the Board is trying to help existing business and enable the fire station to do what is necessary in order to sell it for the highest and best use. Limiting the re-zoning proposal to the south side of Trapelo Road and the fire station seems to make sense.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing to Tuesday, May 25, 2004, at 7:15 p.m. in Town Hall.

3. Public Hearing to Re-Zone the O'Neill Property to Allow Multi-Family Housing

James Heigham read the Public Hearing notice.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing to Tuesday, May 25, 2004, at 7:45 p.m. in Town Hall.

4. Public Hearing on the Town Meeting Article to delete the 1925 building setbacks lines

Planning Coordinator, Jeffrey Wheeler reviewed building setbacks lines throughout the community and the reasons why they should be removed.. Most notable was that there are existing zoning setback lines and the two commonly conflict with each other. This makes redevelopment of structures very difficult as only Town Meeting can remove these lines while relief from zoning requirements can be sought through the Zoning Board of appeals.

Andy McClurg raised concerns about what might happen if the setback lines are removed. He suggested that the Board look at each property individually to see how they are used and what zoning might allow.

James Heigham suggested that the Board recommend deleting the Building Setback Lines from only Palfrey/Central Squares and that the Board take no action on the remaining areas at this time.

Comments from the Audience -

1. Fred Paulsen requested that the Murray Sandler property not be looked at this time because neighborhood wants to see the property converted to residential use.

The Board voted unanimously (5:0) to recommend that Town Meeting delete the Building Setback Lines from only Palfrey/Central Squares.

5. Citizen Petition for an Alternative Proposal for O'Neill Property

Fred Paulsen, representing a special interest group, gave an overview of the alternative proposal to the development of O'Neill's property. He stated that the proposal would include 150 units.

James Heigham questioned how this proposal would be supported by interested parties when there was such objection to the site for a soccer field. According to Fred Paulsen, this proposal is different since there would be not development of the 15 acre O'Neill property abutting the Alewife Reservation.

James Heigham further questioned why this proposal was not brought forward before. Fred Paulsen said that there was no need to because the site makes sense for commercial use. However, with the threat of a 40B application (affordable housing) there is a small window of opportunity for the Town to develop an alternative.

Jeffrey wheeler noted that the Department of Conservation and recreation (DCR) has not provided a written position and any disposition would require a lengthy legislative and public bidding (Chapter 91) process. Furthermore, O'Neill has gone on record opposing the use of this parcel.

Comments from the Audience -

1. Barbara Passero, 31 Grant Avenue, stated that this is a viable alternative and requested the Board's support since it would be a 'Win Win' situation for everyone involved.

The Board voted unanimously to allow Mr. Paulsen and his group to make a more formal presentation to the Board on Tuesday, April 13, at 7:00 p.m. on the alternative development proposal.

10:00 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.